

That is what the American people sent us here to do. This current fight is exhibit number one of why folks don't think Congress works for them. The folks I represent want to see a government that is responsive, that provides needed services, and that supports economic growth.

Mr. Speaker, folks in my region deal in reality. Earlier this year, residents and businesses in the cities of Aberdeen and Hoquiam and Grays Harbor County, Washington, were swamped by heavy rains. Mudslides and flooding put people's lives at risk and took a toll on neighborhoods that they call home.

Local officials were looking for help, and they got it when the Homeland Security Region 3 Incident Management Team came to town. This team worked with locals on the ground to execute the best recovery plan to get people back on their feet.

Are we willing to tell workers like that, who lend a hand at a moment's notice, to go without pay or take a furlough? Are we willing to tell communities in need that when they call for help, there is no one there?

Fourteen percent of the Department's workforce is facing furloughs. This isn't an invisible workforce. These are staffers who administer grants to local governments. They are fire departments and emergency responders after devastating storms.

These are the people who are helping the emergency teams that are on the ground in places like Hoquiam, Washington. That staff won't be able to process emergency requests, won't be able to do their jobs because Congress isn't doing its job.

We should also consider the over 80 percent of Homeland Security employees who will stay on without pay. What kind of message are we sending members of our Coast Guard or our Border Patrol or the Department when we tell them to work without pay? Mortgage payment? Still got to pay it. Utility bills? Still do. Grocery bill? Still got to eat. But paycheck? Sorry.

It is true. If the crew of a ship faced trouble in Washington State's waters, the Coast Guard would still swing into action, but that crew wouldn't get paid for their work, and some of their support staff might not be back at headquarters to help them.

I have already heard from members of the Coast Guard, spouses of Department employees, and everyday citizens worried about how this will impact our communities and our national security because, in my home State of Washington, there are over 6,000 Department workers and we have five Coast Guard stations alone in my region.

Shutdowns like this have ripple effects into our local economies, too. When workers aren't getting pay or their pay is delayed, sacrifices are made. Less money is spent at the grocery store. Friday night dinners out are stopped. Family vacations are canceled or delayed.

It impacts local restaurants, local hotels, and small businesses. We have seen this movie before. Businesses everywhere took a hit when the customers they rely on aren't sure when exactly their next paycheck will come.

Finally, we don't motivate our Federal workforce by engaging in these stunts. We are proud of our Federal workforce in my region. Too often, Congress does not let them know that what they do is important. Too often, they are a bargaining chip in a political fight.

I came to Congress to give people confidence that their government was not broken, that it is staffed with workers dedicated to making a meaningful impact in their lives and in the lives of American citizens.

We will not see qualified and motivated folks join a workforce that faces continuous threats to the job they do every day when the message to our workers and to local businesses is that politics is more important than their paychecks.

I want to end by mentioning, yesterday, former Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge said that this shutdown was "wrong" and "folly."

He said: "These are soldiers at DHS. They wear a different uniform, but the goal and objective and mission is the same—keeping America as safe as possible."

Mr. Speaker, let's keep America safe, and let's reject this shutdown.

STRENGTHENING STUDENT PROTECTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, last year alone, over 450 teachers or school employees across the Nation were arrested for misconduct with a child. That is more than one per day. What is more, the Department of Education has estimated that nearly 10 percent of students are targets of educator sexual misconduct sometime during their school career.

Those numbers should be disturbing to every lawmaker, to every parent, and every grandparent in this body. In an effort to curb this alarming trend, I am proud that the Student Success Act under debate here today includes language from a bill that I introduced, the Jeremy Bell Act, to strengthen student protection efforts and get serious about who is being hired and transferred within our school system.

The Jeremy Bell Act was named after a young boy from West Virginia who was drugged, sexually assaulted, and murdered by his elementary school principal—a man who had been suspected of sexual misconduct at previous jobs but was allowed to quietly transfer from district to district, avoiding repercussions and without awareness from his new employers, a shameful act known as "passing the trash."

Language found within the Student Success Act will end the practice of "passing the trash" by blocking educational agencies from receiving Federal funds if they facilitate the transfer of an employee that they know or have probable cause to believe has engaged in sexual misconduct with a student.

Furthermore, it ensures that the hiring of all school employees will be compliant with current, extensive background check requirements.

As the husband of an educator, I know the overwhelming majority of teachers, educators, school administrators, and support staff are amazing, caring individuals committed to the success of their students.

It is as much to protect the good work that they do, as well as the safety for our children, that we must pass this legislation and take real steps to address this issue.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 6 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Bruce Miroglio, St. Helena Catholic Church, St. Helena, California, offered the following prayer:

Good and gracious God, we ask Your blessing on this day You have provided for us.

As we confront all the challenges that arise from the human condition, we ask Your blessing to allow us to use our intellect and free will to guide our human affairs and to seek the blessings of freedom, personal development, and prosperity for the common good.

In Your goodness, bless the Members of our Nation's House of Representatives. May all their deliberations and discussions be inspired by the vision of Your loving kindness and saving grace.

May the work conducted here today bear rich fruit that nurtures all of the people of this Nation and their dreams for a better world and, thus, be for Your greater honor and glory.

All of this we ask in Your most holy name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.